

THE CENTURION

FEBRUARY, 1917

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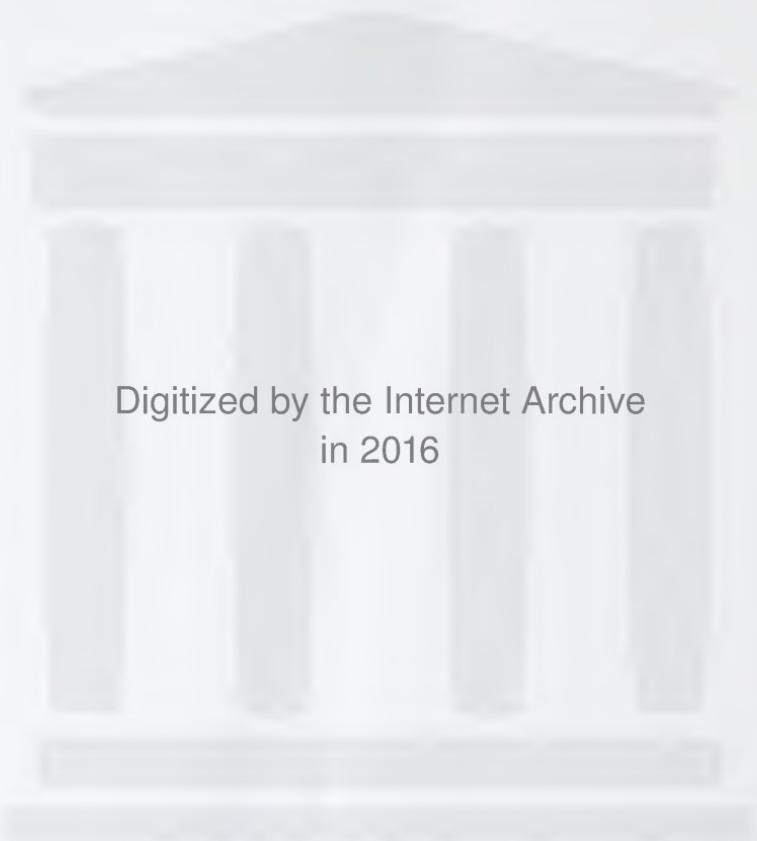
CENTURY MAGAZINE NOTES

ST. NICHOLAS FOR MARCH

BOOKS AND THEIR MAKERS

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Notes on Lincolniana

When February comes around each year there is always a renewed interest in everything concerning Lincoln, and this leads us to speak of the remarkable collection of Century books on Lincoln, a list so remarkable that The Century Co. might well be called the official publishers of Lincolniana.

"Abraham Lincoln: a History"

Chief among these books, of course, is the great "Abraham Lincoln: a History," by his secretaries, John G. Nicolay and John Hay, the monumental ten-volume work that in all probability will always remain as the only full and authoritative record of the private life and public career of the great President. As everyone knows, the advantages enjoyed by the writers of this history were not only incomparably greater than those possessed by any predecessors, but they are also beyond the reach of any future historian. Messrs. Nicolay and Hay were Lincoln's private secretaries for many years and enjoyed his closest intimacy and confidence. One of them, and generally both, were on duty at Lincoln's side every day from 1860 to 1865. During all these years the authors cherished the

idea of writing this history, and Lincoln himself, who was aware of their intention, encouraged and assisted them in



THE WYATT EATON PORTAIT OF LINCOLN
Engraved by Timothy Cole

their work. Some of his most precious manuscripts were given them by his own hand. For twenty years after Lincoln's death Nicolay and Hay gave most of their time to the collection and arrangement of the enormous amount

of material at their disposal. All of Lincoln's papers were unreservedly placed in their hands by the Hon. Robert T. Lincoln, the only surviving member of the family, while the courtesy of many Secretaries of War gave them free and constant access to military reports.

Invaluable and fascinating as this great book is, however, there are many readers who are dismayed by its mere



size, and for them, fortunately, another life of Lincoln exists, not less authoritative but compact in one convenient volume. This is John G. Nicolay's "Abraham Lincoln: A Short History," in which one of the President's devoted secretaries condensed the story that he and Mr. Hay had written out at length. Based upon the great history also is "The Boys' Life of Abraham Lincoln," a vivid and inspiring narrative for all young Americans, by Mr. Nicolay's daughter, Miss Helen Nicolay.

Nor are these the only records for which Lincoln lovers are indebted to

the Nicolay family. Miss Helen Nicolay's "Personal Traits of Abraham Lincoln" is a book of anecdotes mainly, but anecdotes to which no other writer has had access. When Miss Nicolay's father began collecting material for his great work he began also putting many memoranda into a series of envelopes marked "Personal Traits," meaning at the time to make use of the material in the work upon which he was engaged. In the end, however, he left this material unused, and it remained for Miss Helen Nicolay to work the rich accumulation of years into a volume.

"Lincoln the Lawyer"

Less general in its interest, perhaps, but still of extremely wide appeal is Frederick Trevor Hill's "Lincoln the Lawyer." Mr. Hill was long ago impressed by the fact that although Lincoln's practice as a lawyer extended over twenty-four years, his achievements as a statesman so transcended his legal accomplishments that little attention had ever been paid to this side of his life and work. Mr. Hill became convinced that Lincoln's legal training proved invaluable to him at critical moments during his presidency, and that it is possible he would never have been called to his high station had he not practiced at the bar. Accordingly, he set to work and made a profound study of this obscure phase of Lincoln's career, traveling over his old circuit in Illinois, discovering important records that other writers had overlooked, talking with old men who had known Lincoln personally in his capacity as lawyer, and piling up an immense mass of entirely new and carefully docu-

I wish Mr. Nicolay would invite
the following gentlemen to tea at
my house, at 5 P.M. tomorrow.

- ✓ Mr. Schenck
- ✓ Mrs. Pratt
- ✓ Mrs. Carter
- ✓ Mrs. Ogden
- ✓ Mrs. Philips
- ✓ Mrs. Hatch
- ✓ Mrs. Dubois
- ✓ Mr. Nicolay - himself

Saturday, Nov. 3.

Lincoln

A LINCOLN MEMORANDUM. From "Personal Traits of Abraham Lincoln"

mented Lincoln material which at least no lawyer ought to neglect.

Yet another Lincoln book, intensely interesting and rich in anecdote, is "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," by David Homer Bates, who served from 1861-1866 as Manager of the War Department telegraph office and Cipher-Operator. During these years Lincoln came almost daily to the telegraph office, often several times during the day and night to get news at the earliest possible moment. It was not the Lincoln of the White House and of public life that the operators saw and talked with. It was the man Lincoln, bowed down with his heavy load of a nation's struggle, nerves often strained to snapping, but always the man of singularly appealing and lovable personality; and

this is the Lincoln Mr. Bates has pictured in these pages, with interesting side-lights on McClellan, Secretary Stanton and others.

Lincoln's Writings

And then, too, of Lincoln's own writings The Century Co. publishes the official edition—the "Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln," in two volumes, as authorized by Robert T. Lincoln and edited by Messrs. Nicolay and Hay. A unique item, finally, is "Lincoln: Passages from His Speeches and Letters," with an introduction by Richard Watson Gilder, the little "thumbnail" collection of the most famous of Lincoln's utterances, those that display most notably the depth of his wisdom and the rare qualities of his style.

SUCCEEDING WITH WHAT YOU HAVE

By Charles M. Schwab

Charles M. Schwab, the famous steel magnate, has written a book, which is just out. It is called "Succeeding with What You Have," and The Century Co. publishes it at 50 cents. In this book Mr. Schwab tells the secret of his own success and describes the inner workings of the Bethlehem plant. Mr. Schwab says there is more opportunity in America than ever to rise in the world. He tells these stories to prove it:

When I took charge of the Carnegie works at Homestead there was a young chap employed there as water boy. A little later he became a clerk. I had a habit of going over the works at unusual hours, to see how everything was moving. I noticed that no matter what time I came around I would find the former water boy hard at work. I never learned when he slept.

Now, there seemed to be nothing remarkable about this fellow except his

industry. The only way in which he attracted attention was by working longer hours and getting better results than any one else. It was not long before we needed an assistant superintendent. The ex-water boy got the job. When we established our great armor plate department there was not the slightest difference of opinion among the partners as to who should be manager. It was the youth with the penchant for overtime service.

To-day that ex-water boy, Alva C. Dinkey, is head of a great steel company, and very wealthy. His rise was predicated on his willingness to work as long as there was any work to be done.

If a young man entering industry were to ask me for advice, I would say: Don't be afraid of imperiling your health by giving a few extra hours to the company that pays your salary! Don't be reluctant about putting on overalls! Bare hands grip success better than kid gloves. Be thorough in all things, no matter how small or distasteful! The man who counts his hours and kicks about his salary is a self-elected failure.

It may be in seemingly unimportant things that a man expresses his passion for perfection, yet they will count heavily in the long run. When you go into your customary barber shop, you will wait for the man who gives you a little



CHARLES M. SCHWAB

Author of "Succeeding with What You Have"

LINCOLN AT HOME

By Helen Nicolay

One of the most delightful of all the Lincoln books is Helen Nicolay's "Personal Traits of Abraham Lincoln" (The Century Co., \$2.00). Miss Nicolay, as the daughter of the war President's famous secretary and biographer, has had access to an immense amount of intimate material, and it is of this that her book is largely compiled. Here are a few of Miss Nicolay's jottings:

Although wanting in the language of gallantry, Lincoln was not incapable of turning a neat compliment. The artist Carpenter has told me of one that would have pressed Chesterfield hard. An enthusiastic lady gave the President an entirely superfluous bouquet. The situation was momentarily embarrassing, but "with no appearance of discomposure, he stooped down, took the flowers, and looking from them into the sparkling eyes and radiant face of the lady, said, with a gallantry I was unprepared for, "Really, madam, if you give them to *me*, and they are *mine*, I think I cannot possibly make so good a use of them as to present them to *you* in return!"

He was the most abstemious of men. Not that he remained on principle a total abstainer as he was during part of his early life; but he never cared for wines or liquors of any sort, and never used tobacco. Judge Lawrence Weldon once overheard Douglas trying to ridicule him on this point.

"What! You a temperance man?" Douglas asked.

"No," drawled Lincoln, with a smile. "I'm not a temperance man; but I'm temperate in this—to wit—I don't drink."

At table he ate sparingly, without seeming to know what he was eating. When Mrs. Lincoln was away he sometimes absentmindedly omitted the form-

ality of dining altogether. To some visitors who apologized for sending in their cards at the dinner hour, he replied:

"It makes no difference. When my wife is away I just browse around."

Lincoln and the German Merchant

It was the company, not the meat, which interested him. Carl Schurz, for whom he had a strong liking, once asked leave to present his German brother-in-law, a young merchant from Hamburg. Mr. Lincoln told him to bring him the next day about lunch time, adding casually that there would be something to eat. Schurz had no little difficulty in quieting his guest's trepidation. His assertion that there would be no court etiquette or formality whatever was too wild for the foreigner's belief. When he found himself greeted like an old friend, and the three sat down alone to luncheon, he pulled himself out of his stupefaction, and answered entertainingly the many questions about Hamburg with which his host plied him. The meal ended in anecdotes and laughter; and as they left the White House the young German was vainly trying to find words in which to express his puzzled admiration for the man who had risen from peasant to ruler, and, with so much dignity, remained so unconscious of self.

